

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

DHA-05 /058 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3543

USIA WASHDC

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USIA FOR IEU

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PROP, CZ

SUBJECT: GOC PRESS TREATMENT OF U.S.

REF PRAGUE 2163

1. THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF LOCAL PRESS ATTACKS ON PRESIDENT CARTER AS WELL AS A SLIGHT AMERLIORATION OF THE OVERALL ANTI-US PROPAGANDA LINE HERE DURING THE LAST WEEK OF AUGUST.

2. THE COMMUNIST PARTY NEWSPAPER, RUDE PRAVO, WHICH SETS THE TONE FOR OTHER CZECHOSLOVAK PUBLICATIONS, HAS GIVEN THE PRESIDENT ROUGH TREATMENT IN RECENT MONTHS, USING AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE A RANGE OF ISSUES INCLUDING THE NEUTRON BOMB, HUMAN RIGHTS, THE GABRIELOVA CHILD CUSTODY CASE, BLACK VOTERS' DISSATISFACTION WITH CARTER, THE WILMINGTON TEN, AND THE CARTER WELFARE PROPOSAL.

3. THIS APPROACH CONTRASTS WITH THE EVIDENT DURING THE LAST WEEK OF AUGUST WHICH PRODUCED ONLY ONE NEGATIVE PIECE AIMED AT PRESIDENT CARTER BY NAME, AN ARTICLE ON THE PRESIDENT'S DIRECTIVE
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ON NATO. IN THE SAME PERIOD THERE WERE A NUMBER OF CRITICAL PIECES ON THEMES THAT WOULD NORMALLY HAVE SERVED AS OCCASIONS FOR LAUNCHING PERSONAL ATTACKS ON THE PRESIDENT, BUT INSTEAD WERE DIRECTED AGAINST THE MORE GENERAL "DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT," "RULING CIRCLES," "ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS," ETC.

4. IN THE SAME PERIOD RUDE PRAVO CARRIED TWO SHORT ITEMS WITH

CARTER HEADLINES REPORTING, WITHOUT NEGATIVE COMMENT, CARTER STATEMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AND VARIOUS OTHER FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES.

5. ATTACKS ON PRESIDENT CARTER IN THE "NONOFFICIAL" PRESS HAVE BEEN LED BY THE WEEKLY SATIRICAL MAGAZINE, DIKOBRAZ. THESE REACHED SOMETHING OF A CRESCENDO IN THE AUGUST 23 EDITION, WHICH HAD AS ITS COVER, A LA TIME, A CARTOON OF THE PRESIDENT WEARING A DOVE-SHAPED SMILE AND A TIE ON WHICH THE PATTERN SPELLED OUT THE WORD "NEUTRON." THE CAPTION READ "THE NEWEST CARTER SMILE."

6. THE AUGUST 31 EDITION OF THE MAGAZINE WAS SOMEWHAT Milder IN ITS TREATMENT, ALTHOUGH IT CARRIED AN ARTICLE WHICH CHIDED THE PRESIDENT ON THE GABRIELOVA CASE AND A CARTOON SHOWING THE NEUTRON BOMB AS CARTER'S CONTRIBUTION TO BELGRADE.

7. THE INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN RUDE PRAVO'S AND DIKOBRAZ'S TREATMENT OF THE PRESIDENT MAY INDICATE THAT THE FORMER IS ONLY TESTING A NEW COURSE WHICH THE OTHER WILL ADOPT IN DUE COURSE, OR SIMPLY, THAT DIKOBRAZ HAS A BACKLOG OF ANTI-CARTER ISSUES IT MUST USE UP BEFORE ADOPTING THE NEW LINE.

8. THE SOVIET UNION'S RESPONSE TO THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S INITIATIVES TO EASE TENSIONS WITH USSR AND IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH CUBA (.7 DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAS RECEIVED BRIEF, FACTUAL PRESS TREATMENT HERE) MAY ACCOUNT IN LARGE PART FOR APPARENT LESSENING, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IF NOT YET DISAPPEARANCE, OF PERSONAL ATTACKS ON THE PRESIDENT. IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THE CURRENT CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERSHIP TAKING THE INITIATIVE IN THIS AREA, GIVEN ITS PENCHANT FOR PLAYING IT SAFE. IF THE TREND IS INDEED GENUINE, IT MORE LIKELY THAN NOT REPRESENTS THE LATEST EPISODE IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK GAME OF FOLLOW THE SOVIET LEADER. BYRNE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: PROPAGANDA, ANTIAMERICAN, THE PRESS
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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SAS ID: 1364393
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Subject: GOC PRESS TREATMENT OF U.S.
TAGS: PROP, CZ, US, (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7b3e4a4b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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